

magnanimity worthy of the heroic but christian and forbearing spirit which had triumphed in the struggle just ended.

I am conscious of so tedious a narrative, that I shall not abuse your patience by the reflections to which it might naturally give rise. My object has been to present, in outline merely, but in chronological order, and natural connection and dependence, some of the leading events in the struggle for our common freedom, of which my native State was the theatre, after it had become a contest of arms. Although this has been done with a prolixity and minuteness of reference to time and place, far exceeding the limits of good taste in a discourse for the hour, before an audience unfamiliar with the localities described, it is, at best, I fear, but a meagre and defective presentation of the subject. I trust, however, in the retrospect, it may not be wholly unprofitable in the researches of the student of history. The history of the war in the North has been written with far more minuteness than in the South. That that of North Carolina has been especially neglected, will be manifest when it is observed that so important event as the capture of her Chief Magistrate by the enemy, is mentioned in no professed history of the Revolution, as far as my researches have gone, and is brought to general notice for the first time in the recent works of Wheeler and Lossing, and in them, without any detail or reference to the important questions of public law, to which in its consequence it gave rise. As the rapid course of time hurries us further and further from the epoch of the Revolution, filling up the intervening space with the great events of the two succeeding generations, its characters and incidents and places are becoming more and more objects of curiosity and interest. If I shall have contributed to unfold a leaf in a single book of this great epic of the nation, I shall regard the occasion allowed by the honored invitation of your society, as an opportunity for the fulfillment of a patriotic duty.

I cannot, however, omit to remind you, while we delight, like the Athenians in the time of Demosthenes, "to praise our ancestors, and tell of their trophies," that although the scenes which have been imperfectly presented to your view were enacted in a far distant part of the country, they, in their day, excited sensations which vibrated from Maine to Georgia; that every well-aimed rifle on the banks of the Catawba, Yadkin, or Cape Fear, and every successful exploit of Greene, Morgan, Williams, Davidson, Davie, and their associates, aided by so much in thinning the ranks, and overcoming the power of a British Commander-in-Chief, who,